

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORMSEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS**1 NAME**

HISTORIC

McCormick School

AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

855 South Martinson

CITY, TOWN

Wichita

VICINITY OF

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

No. 4 Dan Glickman

STATE

Kansas

CODE
20

COUNTY

Sedgwick

CODE

173

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

☐ DISTRICT
☒ BUILDING(S)
☐ STRUCTURE
☐ SITE
☐ OBJECT

OWNERSHIP

☒ PUBLIC
☐ PRIVATE
☐ BOTH
PUBLIC ACQUISITION
☐ IN PROCESS
☐ BEING CONSIDERED

STATUS

☒ OCCUPIED
☐ UNOCCUPIED
☐ WORK IN PROGRESS
ACCESSIBLE
☒ YES: RESTRICTED
☐ YES: UNRESTRICTED
☐ NO

PRESENT USE

☐ AGRICULTURE ☐ MUSEUM
☐ COMMERCIAL ☐ PARK
☒ EDUCATIONAL ☐ PRIVATE RESIDENCE
☐ ENTERTAINMENT ☐ RELIGIOUS
☐ GOVERNMENT ☐ SCIENTIFIC
☐ INDUSTRIAL ☐ TRANSPORTATION
☐ MILITARY ☐ OTHER:**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

Board of Education

STREET & NUMBER

428 South Broadway

CITY, TOWN

Wichita

VICINITY OF

STATE

Kansas 67202

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTIONCOURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Register of Deeds

STREET & NUMBER

Sedgwick County Courthouse

CITY, TOWN

Wichita

STATE

Kansas

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

Historic Sites Survey

DATE

1975

☐ FEDERAL ☒ STATE ☐ COUNTY ☐ LOCALDEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

Kansas State Historical Society

CITY, TOWN

Topeka

STATE

Kansas 66612

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION

☐ EXCELLENT
☒ GOOD
☐ FAIR

☐ DETERIORATED
☐ RUINS
☐ UNEXPOSED

CHECK ONE

☐ UNALTERED
☒ ALTERED

CHECK ONE

☒ ORIGINAL SITE
☐ MOVED DATE _____

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Located at the corner of McCormick and South Martinson is McCormick School, a two-and-one-half story rectangular structure with truncated hip roof and full basement. The main facade of the building faces east and is arranged symmetrically around a central towered entrance pavilion. The building is constructed of brick, but the exterior walls are veneered throughout with rock-faced coursed limestone. The roof is sheathed with composition shingles while the trim of roof, windows and doors is of white-painted wood. The building measures approximately 82 feet north to south and 70 feet east to west.

The school building initially contained only four classrooms, two-over-two, with stairway and halls located in the center of the plan. The original classrooms have a set of three windows arranged regularly on each of two exposures; there are additional single windows on each story at what was the west end of the original north and south walls. Each window has a three-light transom surmounting sash with six-over-one lights. Subsequently, four more classrooms, also two-over-two, were added to the rear (west) of the structure, which resulted in the present four-over-four plan. This addition is also veneered with limestone and on the west wall features a simplified central pavilion element that echoes the one on the east facade. But unlike the original building, there is an asymmetrical arrangement of multi-paned ribbon windows rather than regular triadic groupings of single openings.

The east entrance pavilion is the school's most notable architectural feature. It consists of twin, two story polygonal towers that flank a central two-and-one-half story rectangular gabled tower and are linked by an archway that shelters the double door entry. This entry is at ground level. Small windows in the walls of the twin towers are asymmetricaly arranged.

Other notable architectural features include the dentilled cornice and the detailing of the circular window of the central gabled tower, where the window is enframed by stone laid in a radiating pattern.

Alterations:

The present appearance of McCormick School conveys well its historic character, but certain alterations have been made over the years:

1. The addition to the west of four classrooms, arranged two-over-two, doubled the size of the original building and altered the overall fenestration pattern. This addition was made within 22 years of the original construction, and, although not especially noteworthy in its own right, does expand the structure's historic character. When viewed head-on from the east, the rear addition is not visible.

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2. Each classroom has an exterior exit door with fire escape. Provision of these exits has required alteration of five windows located on the north and south walls of the original portion of the building and of several windows located in the rear addition. Two basement windows on the east facade have been altered to provide access to two basement rooms. The west facade has also been provided with fire escapes.

3. The main entrance pavilion was originally crowned by an open wooden belfry. This feature was reportedly weakened by winds and subsequently removed in 1935-1936.

4. In 1944 the original slate roof was replaced with composition shingles.

5. In 1930 another classroom building was constructed to the west and north of the school and connected to the McCormick School at the west by a breezeway element. Although this building is partially visible from the street, it is visually subordinate to the original McCormick School building. When viewed from the east and south especially, the building continues to be the visual focus of the schoolyard, just as it was when originally constructed.

Condition:

The physical condition of McCormick School is good.

SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD		AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION	
00-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE	
00-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE	
00-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN	
00-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER	
00-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION	
00-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)	
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION			

SPECIFIC DATES 1889-1890 BUILDER/ARCHITECT Proudfoot and Bird

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The McCormick School is significant to the city of Wichita for a number of reasons. It is the oldest extant public school in the city; it is the work of a well-known architectural firm, Proudfoot and Bird, and the only remaining public school in the city of their design; and it is an important element of the city's architectural history, exemplifying the Richardsonian romanesque fashion of the day.

History

The late 1880s was a period of great economic growth for the city of Wichita, Kansas. Increased population forced the city to seek ways to expand its public school system. McCormick School, the construction of which was authorized by the city school board in 1889, was one of several new neighborhood public schools erected during this period.

The architects for the four room school were Proudfoot and Bird, a Wichita based firm which received \$266.70 for the plans and specs and the contractor was William Duncombe. The building site cost \$4,000 and the building was completed in 1890 at a cost of \$9,728. By 1909-12, the school could not accommodate a growing enrollment, so the school board authorized a two story addition that would add another four classrooms to the facility. Designed by an architect named Parsons, the addition was completed in 1912. In the 1930's, a second building was erected at the site, to the north and west of the original school building. Around 1935-1936, the bell tower of the original school reportedly was weakened by winds and had to be removed. Since the 1950s, various temporary classroom structures have been used at the site to accommodate increases in enrollment.

Significance

The McCormick School is an important remnant of Wichita's late 19th/early 20th century history, for it was one of several neighborhood schools constructed and expanded during this period. To the citizens of Wichita, expansion of public school facilities signified that the city was growing and progressing. Importantly, too, the design as much as the practical purpose of these new school facilities received considerable local attention for the citizenry was conscious that construction of

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such public buildings afforded them the opportunity of evidencing their taste in addition to their prosperity. This attitude is illustrated by an article about McCormick and four other newly constructed schools published in the Wichita Morning Eagle on August 3, 1890. It was reported that "The Wichita school buildings, public and denominational, are the admiration of all strangers. They see upon every hand not only evidence of wealth but such structures of art as proclaim the taste and refinement of her people. The work of the artisan and the taste and culture of the architect have gone together whenever and wherever there has been expenditure of the public's money. The school buildings and other public buildings of Wichita would be a credit to any city of ten times her population." The McCormick School is the only remaining school of this period in Wichita.

In addition to being associated with an important moment in Wichita's cultural history, the school has an important architectural significance, not only because of contemporary admiration but because the building is a characteristic example of the romanesque revival style of architecture as promulgated by the nationally famous American architect, H. H. Richardson and his followers during the 1870s and early 1880s. The school's architects are indebted to Richardson's work in their use of the arched and towered entrance pavilion and in the sense of bulk that is conveyed by the rock-faced limestone walls and the overall horizontality of the design. Despite the obvious reliance on the popular Richardsonian romanesque fashion of the period, however, the school's design seems an individual expression. It is a simple design, yet one that has a forceful and monumental aspect--an expression derived from both the material employed and the symmetry of the composition. But its singularity results primarily from the treatment of the towers that frame the central entrance pavilion of the main facade--here the windows of the towers are disposed asymmetrically in a subtle way, and thus provide an understated but enlivening counterpoint to the overall symmetry of the composition.

In short, the school was an up-to-date and sensitive design, for its period, which not only illustrates the enthusiasm of midwestern citizens for visible displays of fashionable thinking (the Richardsonian romanesque style was at this time leading the architectural field in popularity), perhaps to counteract accusations that the "frontier" was wild and uncivilized, but also demonstrates the architectural expertise the citizens of Wichita had available to them at this time.

The architects for the McCormick School were Proudfoot and Bird, a Wichita firm established in the city by 1886. W.T. Proudfoot (b. 1860), was educated in Iowa but had been briefly exposed to architectural trends in Boston when he attended MIT for a semester of architecture courses in 1884-85. His partner, G.W. Bird, was evidently from Philadelphia. The

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young firm received an impressive number of large commissions from Wichita clients, including those for Garfield University (now Friends University), Wichita City Hall, and the old YMCA building--all properties presently listed in the National Register of Historic Places. The firm was also equally at home with smaller projects and received numerous commissions for commercial structures and for homes, such as Proudfoot's own Hillside Cottage, also a National Register property. A review of these works suggests that Proudfoot and Bird were profoundly influenced both by the monumental Richardsonian romanesque style and by the freer approach promoted by the example of Shingle style work and that the firm was capable of applying these influences to a wide variety of situations. The McCormick School is an interesting example of the firm's work in that it partakes of the monumentality of the public commissions, and also displays something of the freedom of the domestic commissions. Although the firm designed several public schools in Wichita, the McCormick School is the only one remaining.

Proudfoot and Bird left Wichita in the early 1890s, and went on to distinguish themselves in Salt Lake City, Utah, and then with extensive work on the campus of Iowa State University at Ames, Iowa. The firm acquired a fine reputation wherever they worked. The Wichita commissions, including the McCormick School, then, are instructive and valuable remnants of the firm's early architectural designs.

NOTE: The above statements are based on current information and understanding. If additional material relevant to the property becomes available in the future, revisions to this statement may be necessary.

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Annual Report of the Wichita Public Schools (Wichita, Smith and Moore, 1890), pp. 26, 34, 35, 43, 44, 46, 47, 64.

Annual Report of the Wichita Public Schools (Wichita, n.p., 1891), pp. 33, 44, 45.

Bentley, O.H., editor, History of Wichita, Vol. 1 (Chicago, C.F. Cooper and Co., 1910), pp. 338, 339.

Clay, Elsie, "This Is Your Life, McCormick School," (PTA program text, ca. 1969).

Cole, Everett Sickler, The History of Public Elementary Education in Wichita, Kansas, from 1871 to 1963 (Research Study Number 1 submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirement for Ed.D., Colorado State College, Greeley, Colorado, August, 1964), pp. 103, 104.

Gray, Steve, "Proudfoot and Bird," (Paper submitted to the Department of Architecture, Iowa State University, Ames, Iowa, November 17, 1975).

"Proceedings of the Board of Education of Wichita, Kansas," 1889, 1911.

Wichita Evening News-Beacon, July 27, 1889.

Wichita Morning Eagle, August 30, 1890.

Withey, Henry F., and Elsie Rathburn Withey, Biographical Dictionary of American Architects (Deceased) (Los Angeles, Hennessey and Ingalls, Inc., 1970), p. 492.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

see continuation sheet

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY less than one

UTM REFERENCES

A 1 4 6 4 4 9 5 0 4 1 7 0 6 6 5
ZONE EASTING NORTHING

B
ZONE EASTING NORTHING

C
ZONE EASTING NORTHING

D
ZONE EASTING NORTHING

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Lots 5,7,9, and 11 on Martinson avenue and the east 40 feet of Lots 6,8, 10 and 12 on Elizabeth in Lawrence's Seventh Addition to the City of Wichita.

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE CODE COUNTY CODE

STATE CODE COUNTY CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE Julie A. Wortman, Architectural Historian

Richard Pankratz, Director, Historic Preservation Department

ORGANIZATION

Kansas State Historical Society

DATE

June 1, 1978

STREET & NUMBER

120 West 10th

TELEPHONE

913 296-3251

CITY OR TOWN

Topeka

STATE

Kansas

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

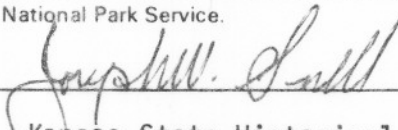
NATIONAL

STATE

LOCAL X

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

FEDERAL REPRESENTATIVE SIGNATURE



TITLE

Executive Director, Kansas State Historical Society

DATE

7-6-78

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

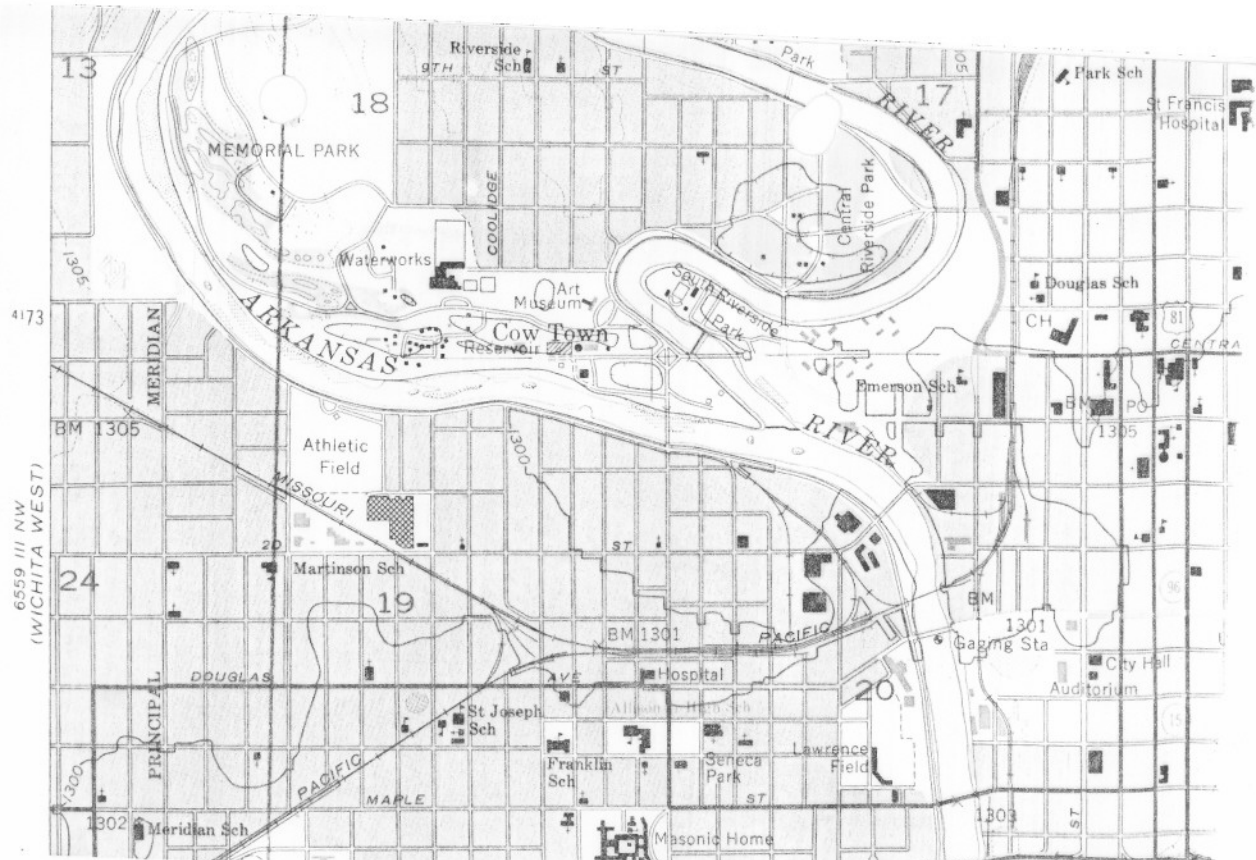
DATE

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST:

DATE

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

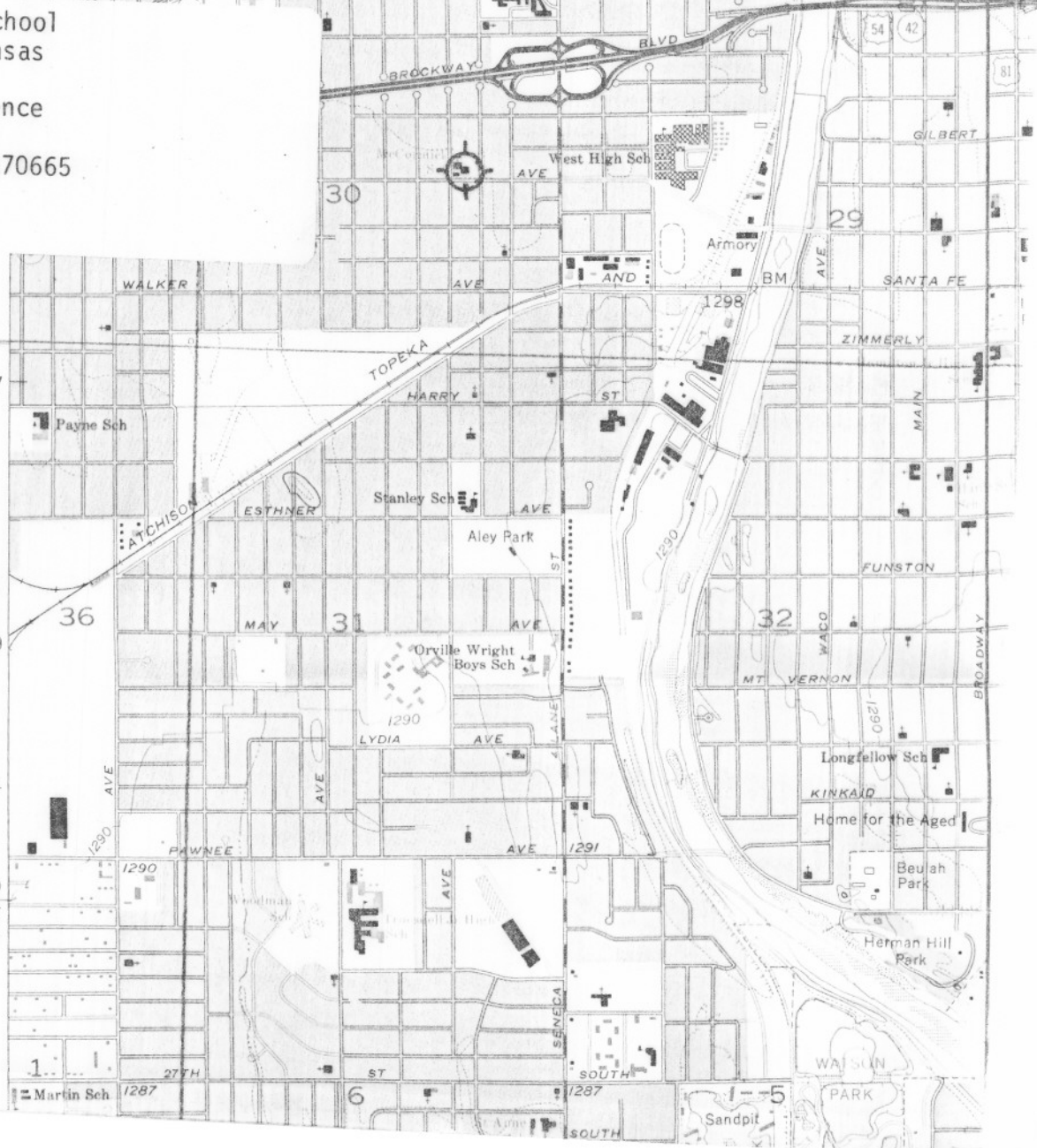


McCormick School
Wichita, Kansas

U T M Reference

14 644950 4170665

VIOLA 21
SCHULTE 5.9



Wichita East
Quadrangle

T. 27 S.

360 000

FEET

T. 28 S.